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The situation in the Middle East

Elimination of racism and racial discrimination

Security Council
Fifty-fifth year

Letter dated 16 March 2000 from the Permanent Representative of Israel to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I am writing to express my concern over the alarming campaign of anti-Israel and anti-Jewish incitement emanating from some Arab countries over recent weeks.

At the very time when intensive efforts are being made to advance the peace negotiations between Israel and its neighbours, this orchestrated campaign of inflammatory rhetoric has been intensified, including among countries party to the negotiations.

This propaganda campaign knows no bounds; demonization of the Israeli "enemy", anti-Semitism of the most heinous sort and Holocaust denial have emerged in full force. Diatribes which go far beyond current issues and which attack Israel's very existence, malign Jewish teaching and recycle anti-Semitic canards coincide with the ritual burning of effigies of Israel's leaders in order to galvanize popular emotions. The campaign does not refrain from advocating violence. Alarmingly, this rhetoric has been unleased by official organs, appearing in official and governmental media, including in countries party to negotiations with Israel.

The message, at times tacit but often explicit, permeates the public arena and fans the flames of hatred to worrisome levels.

It undermines the development of trust and confidence, which is essential for the Middle East peace negotiations to have any chance of success, and deals a heavy blow to hopes of reconciliation in the region.

All those in the Middle East who support peace — whether in Governments, official institutions or the media — should be called upon to halt the unbridled wave of hostility being propagated in some official Arab media.

I urge you to give wholehearted encouragement to this cause. Your unwavering stance against racism in all its forms, and the high regard in which your office is held, could lend critical support in the effort to halt this campaign of hatred, which is so destructive to the prospects for peace.

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I should be grateful if you would have the present letter circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda items 43 and 114, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Yehuda **Lancry**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative